Overview of the Incident Command System as Practiced in the United States

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US Department of Agriculture Forest Service
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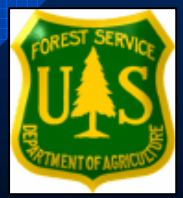


Basic ICS Concepts

- The ICS is a disaster response management organization structure: specific technical competency skills are integrated in the ICS organization
- ICS used on day-to-day basis for routine incidents as well as for major emergencies; activated at first response

For Example:
Day to Day Routine Incident
Structure Fire or Motor Vehicle Accident

ICS Features

- Clear objectives and priorities
- Defined operational objectives and organization
- Incident Action Plan

  Objectives and Priorities
  Tactical Assignments
  Communication Plan
  Weather
  Travel Routes/Maps
  Organization Chart
  Medical Plan
  Air Operations Plan
  Safety
- Common terminology

ICS Features (cont)

- Common communications
- Uniform resource typing
- Written Position Descriptions
  - Roles and responsibilities defined
  - Clear lines of authority, chain of command and reporting requirements
- Standardized personnel qualifications and training – national coordinating group

Five Major Management Activities

- Command
  - Sets objectives
  - Sets priorities
  - Overall responsibility at the incident
- Planning
  - Develops the action plan to accomplish the objectives
  - Collects and evaluates information
  - Maintains resource status
  - Maintains incident documentation

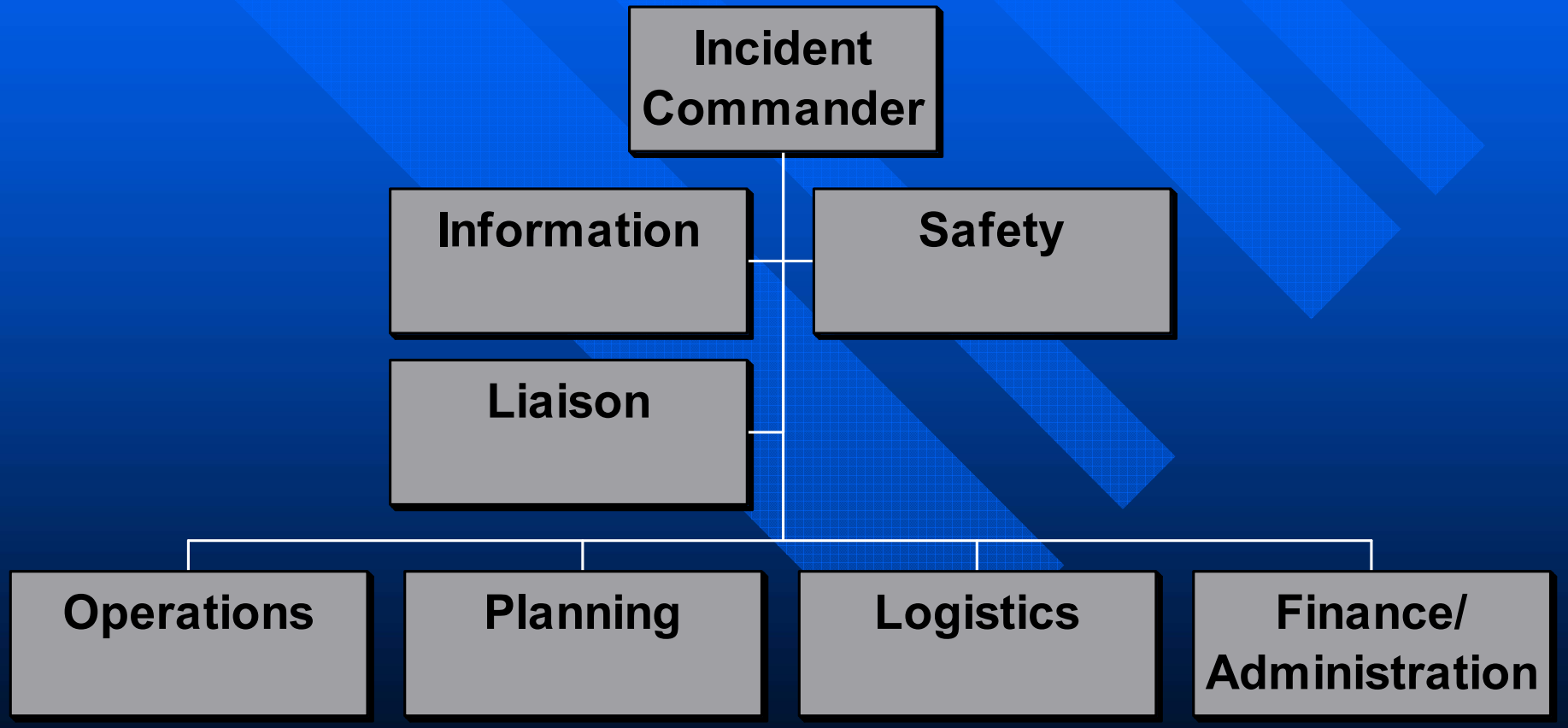
Five Major Management Activities

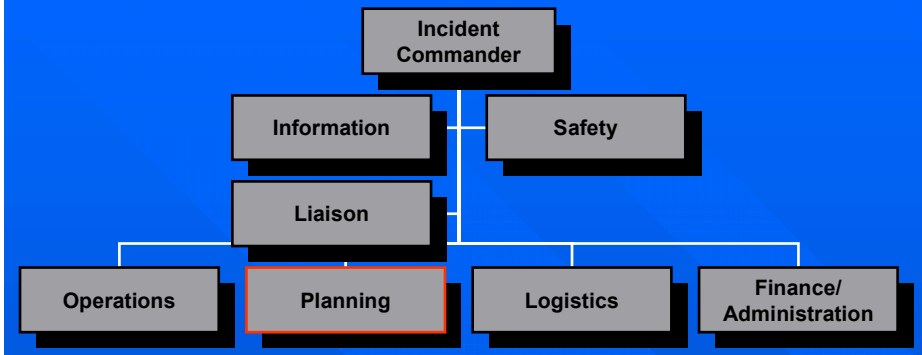
- Logistics
  - Provides support to meet incident needs
  - Provides resources and all other services needed to support the incident
- Finance/Administration
  - Monitors costs related to incident
  - Provides accounting, procurement, time recording, and cost analyses

Five Major Management Activities

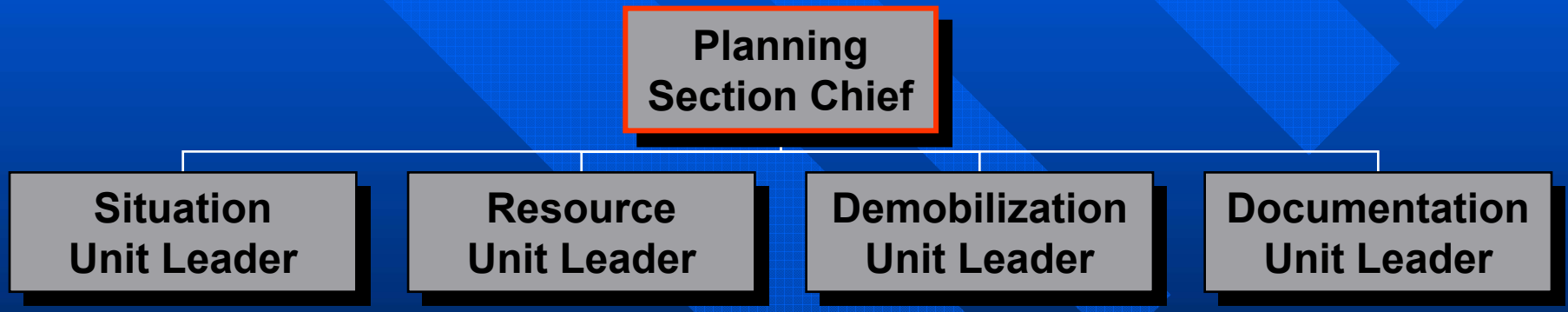
- Operations
  - Conducts tactical operations to carry out the plan
  - Develops the tactical objectives, organization, and directs all resources

ICS
Major Organization Functions




Incident Commander
Information
Safety
Liaison
Operations
Planning
Logistics
Finance/ Administration

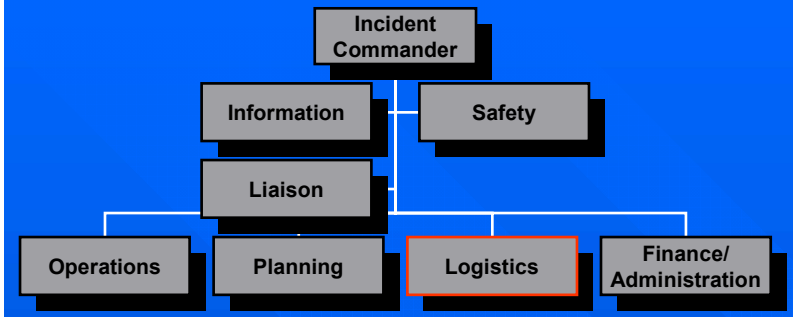
Planning


Planning Section Chief
Situation Unit Leader
Resource Unit Leader
Demobilization Unit Leader
Documentation Unit Leader

For Example:
World Trade Center

The World Trade Center 11 September, 2001

- The planning section was asked to develop a comprehensive plan for the rescue and recovery of the World Trade Center Disaster
- The Incident Action Plan included a summary of the cooperating agencies (26+), objectives, daily assignments and accounted for resources.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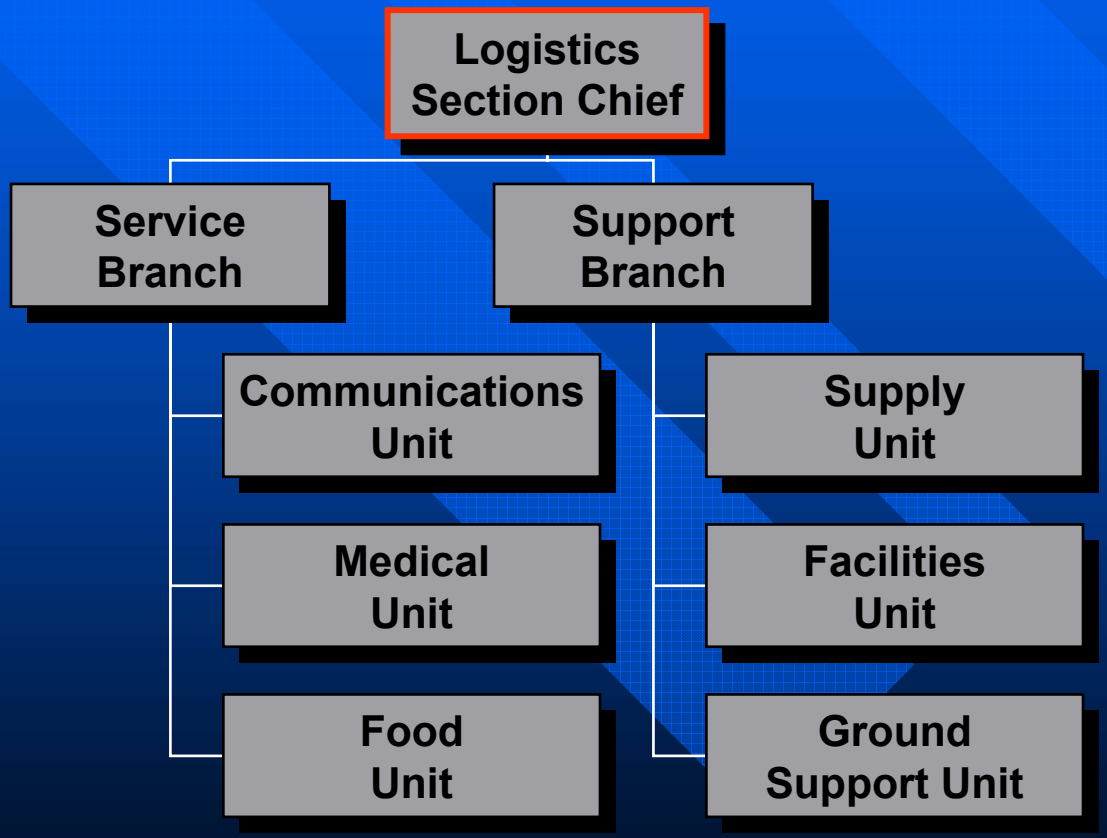
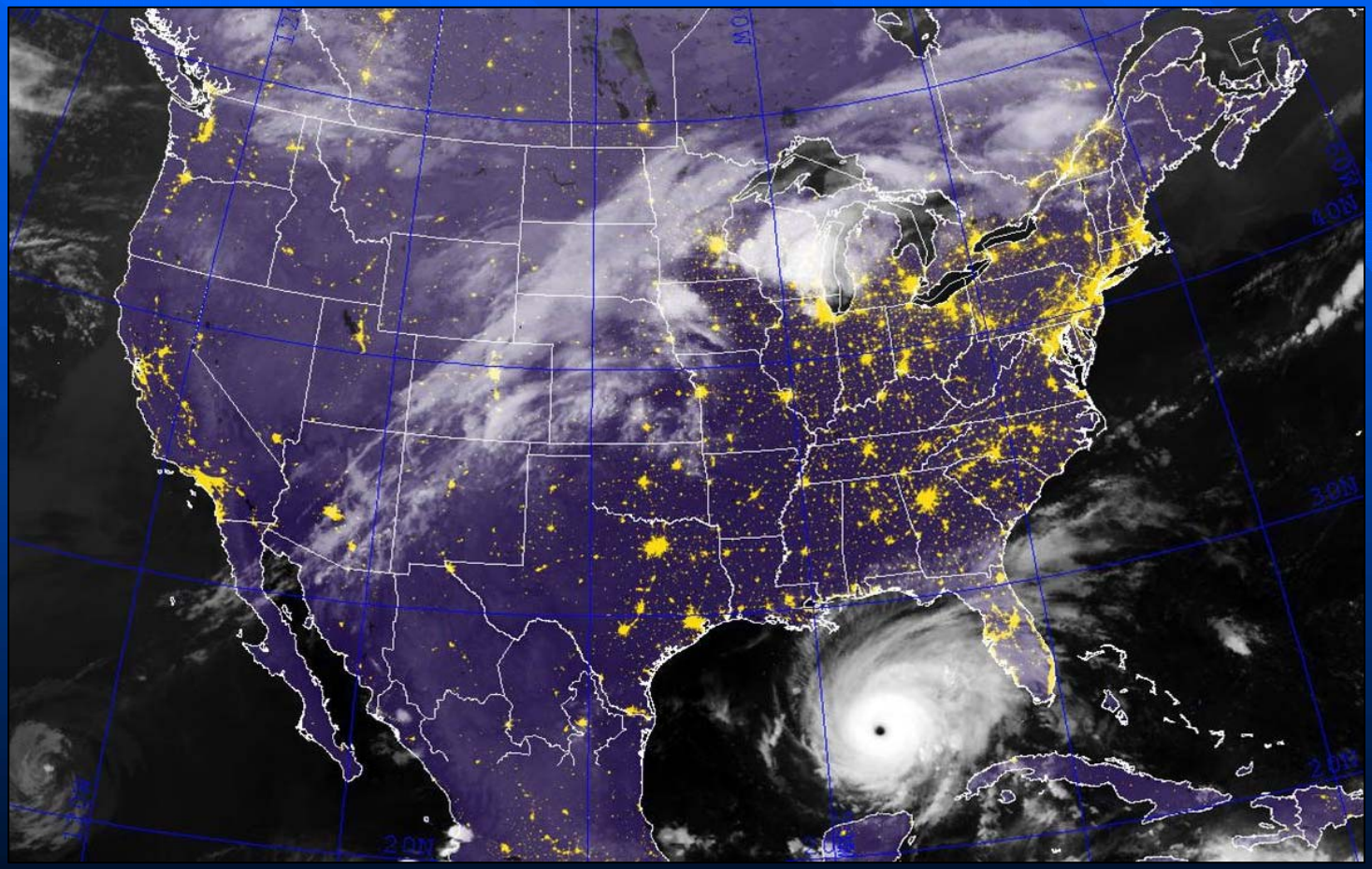
Information
Safety
Liaison
Operations
Planning
Logistics
Finance/ Administration

Logistics


Logistics Section Chief
Service Branch
Support Branch
Communications Unit
Medical Unit
Food Unit
Supply Unit
Facilities Unit
Ground Support Unit

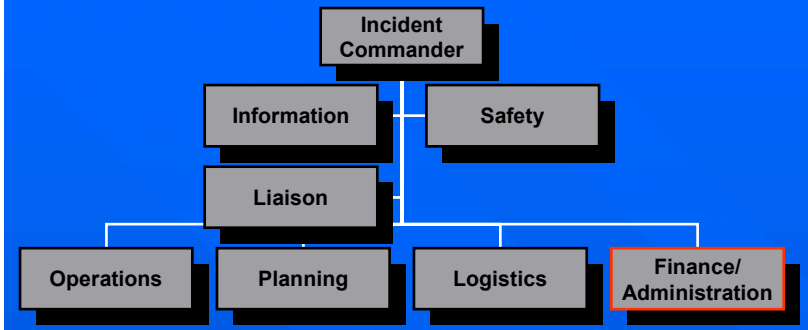
For Example:
Hurricane Rita



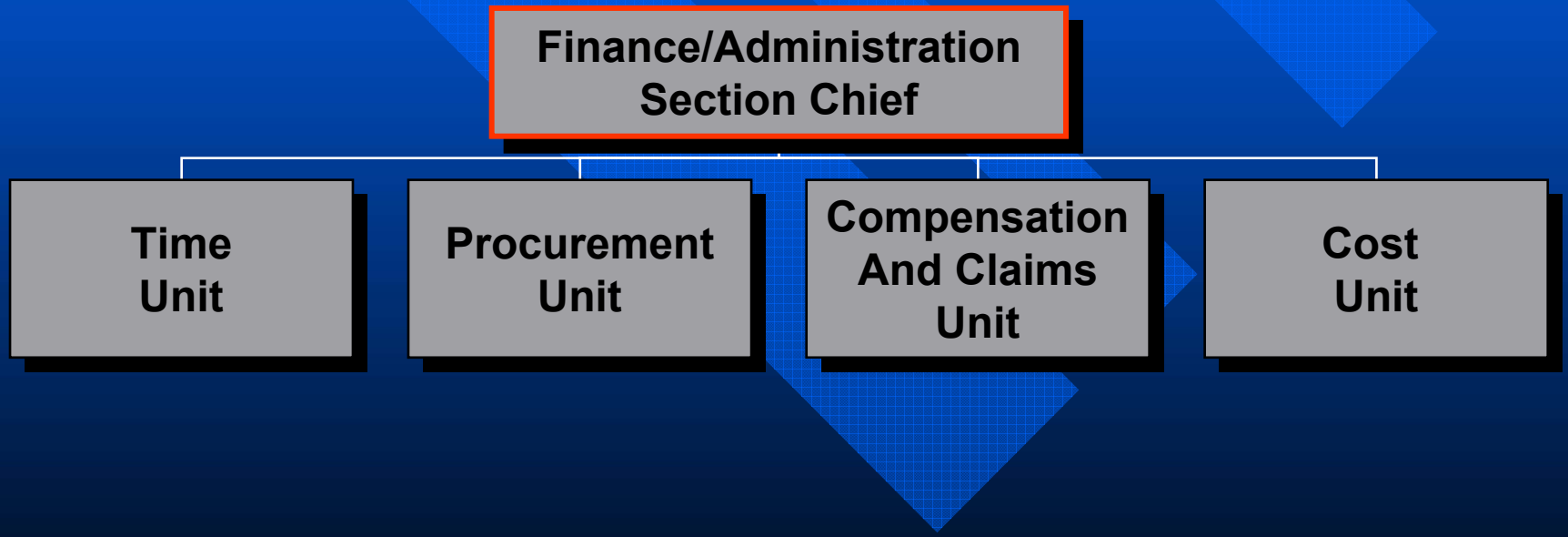
The challenge of bringing supplies while the evacuation is occurring…

Hurricane Rita Texas

- An incident base was developed and managed to support in excess of 3,000 rescue personnel assigned to Eastern Texas.

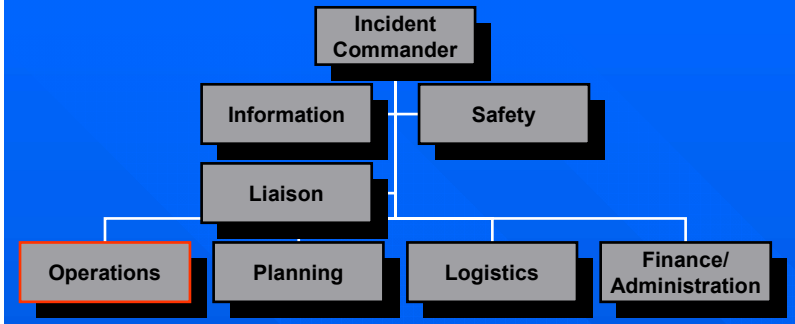


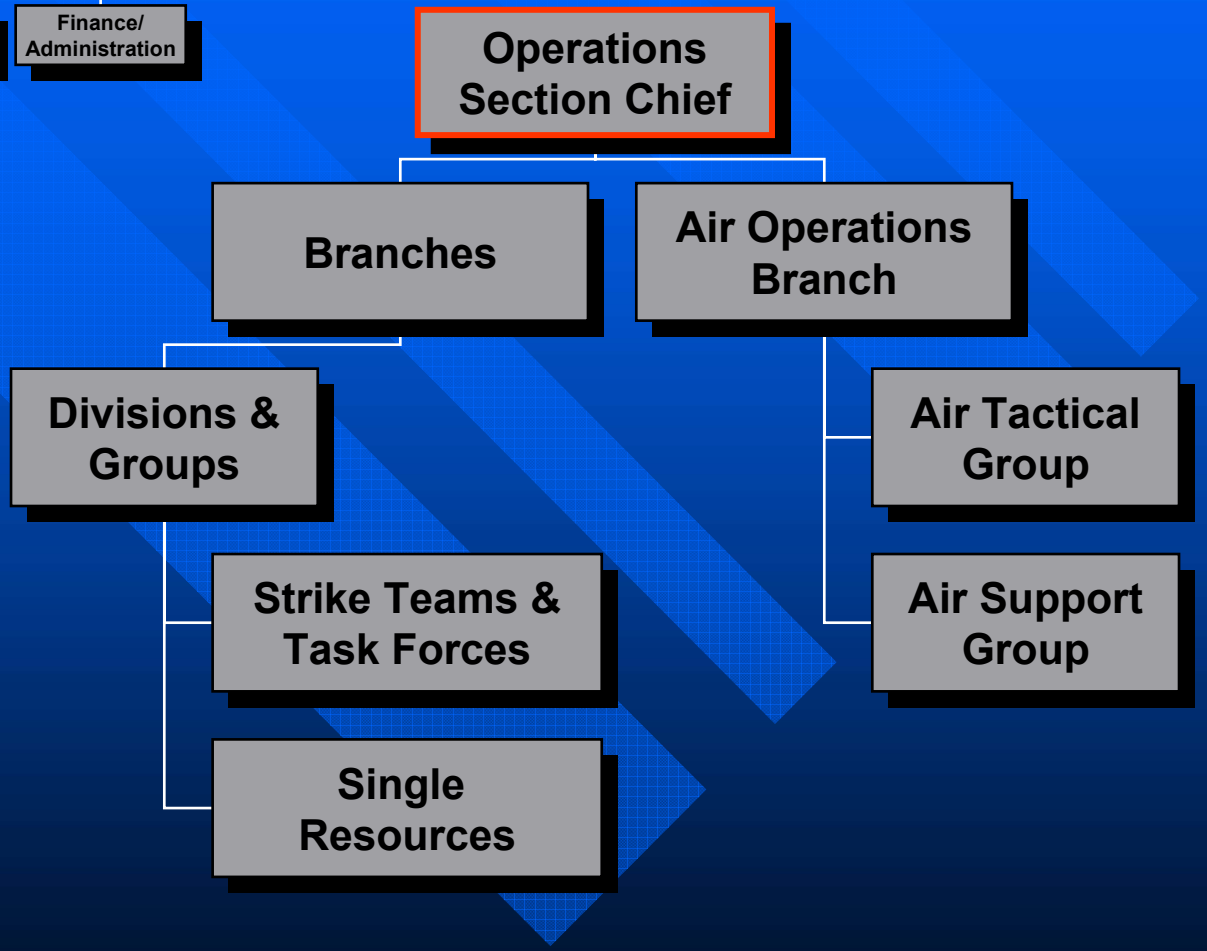
Finance/ Administration



For Example:
The Columbia Shuttle Recovery

Operations


Incident Commander
Information
Safety
Liaison
Operations
Planning
Logistics
Finance/ Administration


Operations Section Chief
Branches
Air Operations Branch
Divisions & Groups
Strike Teams & Task Forces
Single Resources
Air Tactical Group
Air Support Group

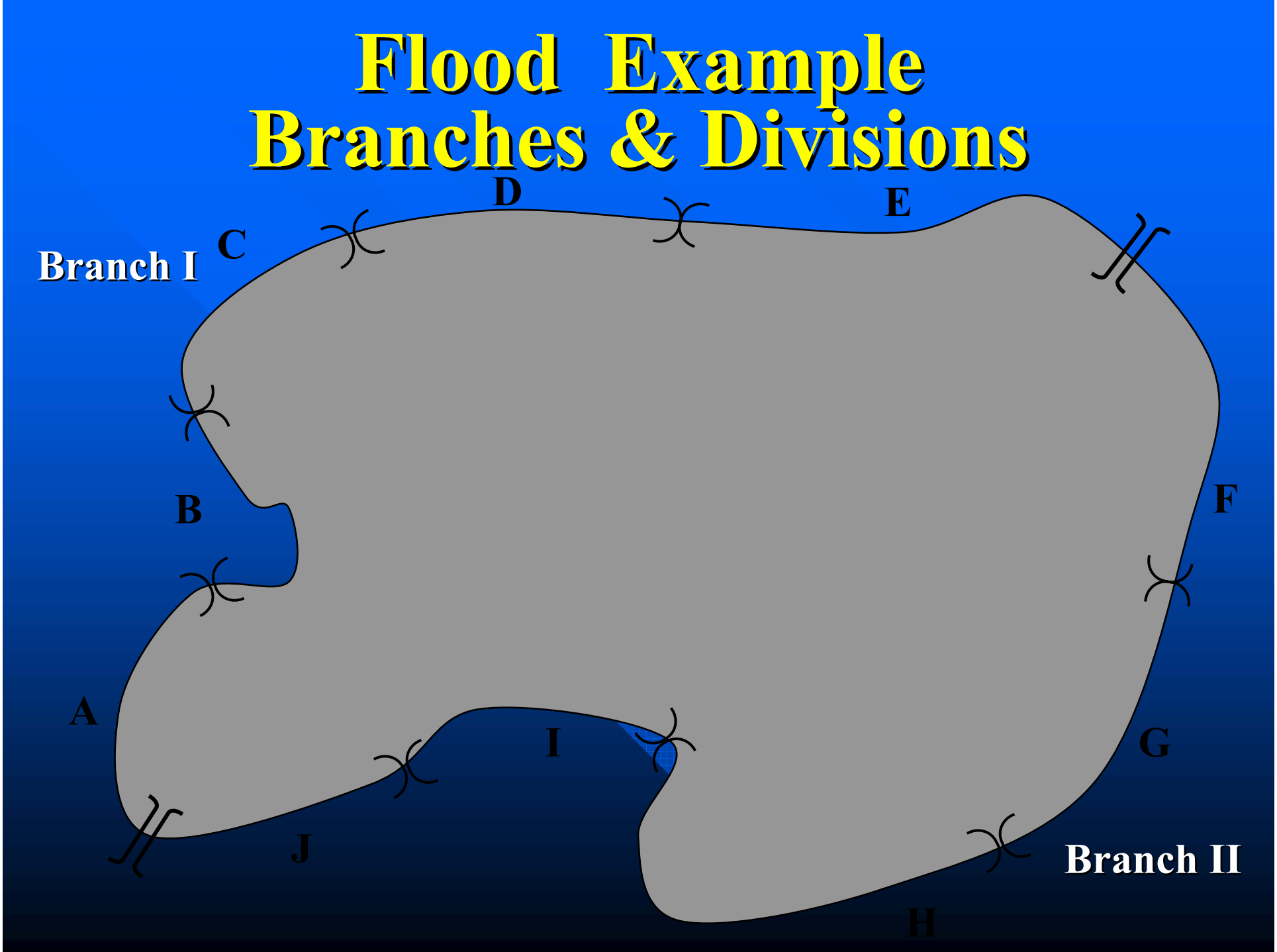
Initial Response

Span of Control

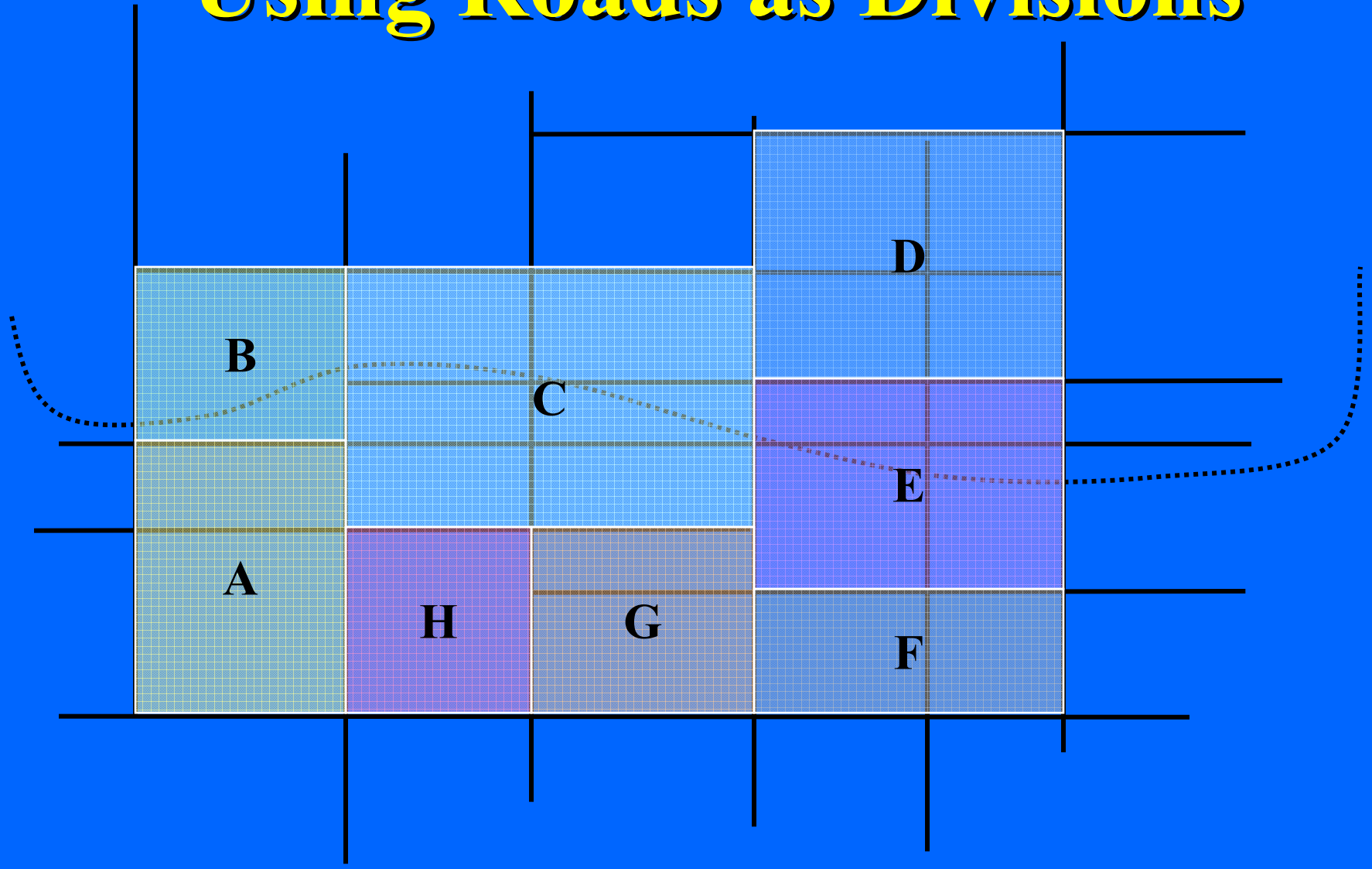
- Number of resources
- Complexity of the incident
- What is needed
- Safety
- Cost effectiveness
- Resource protection
- Effective leadership

Flooding

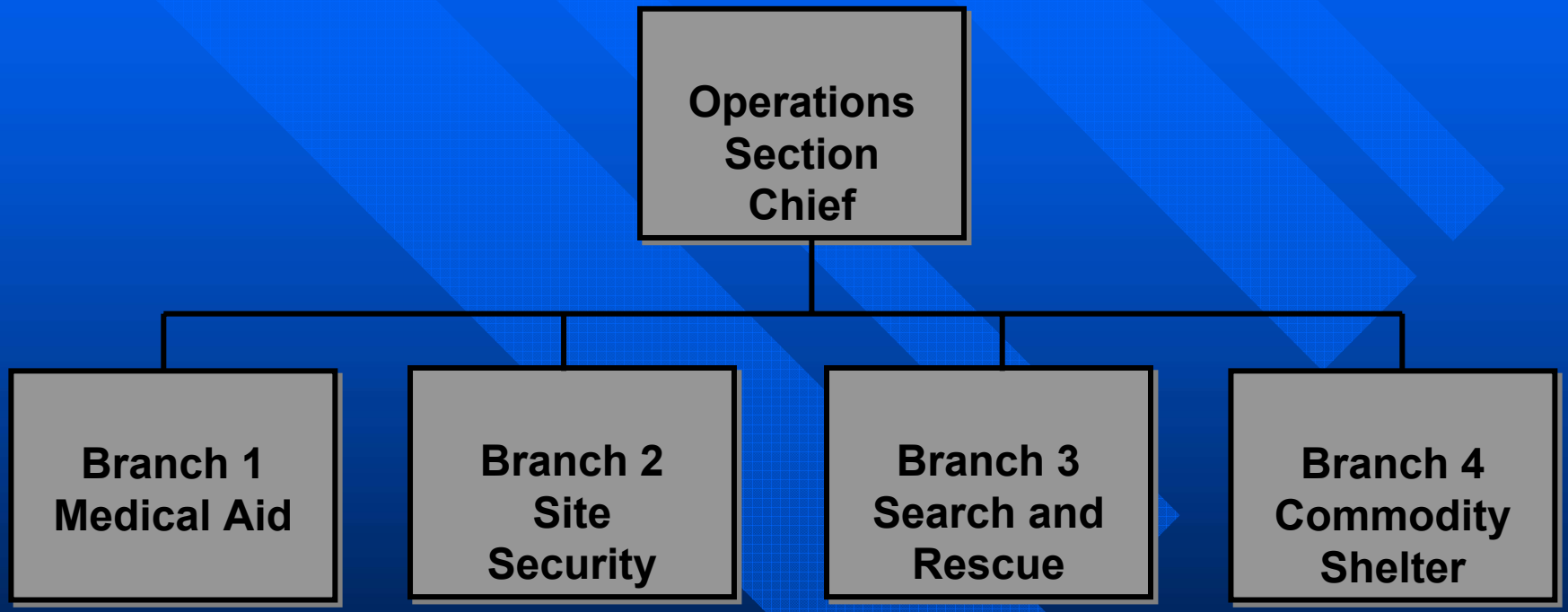
Flood Example
Branches & Divisions



Earthquake Example – Using Roads as Divisions



Earthquake Example – Functional Groups

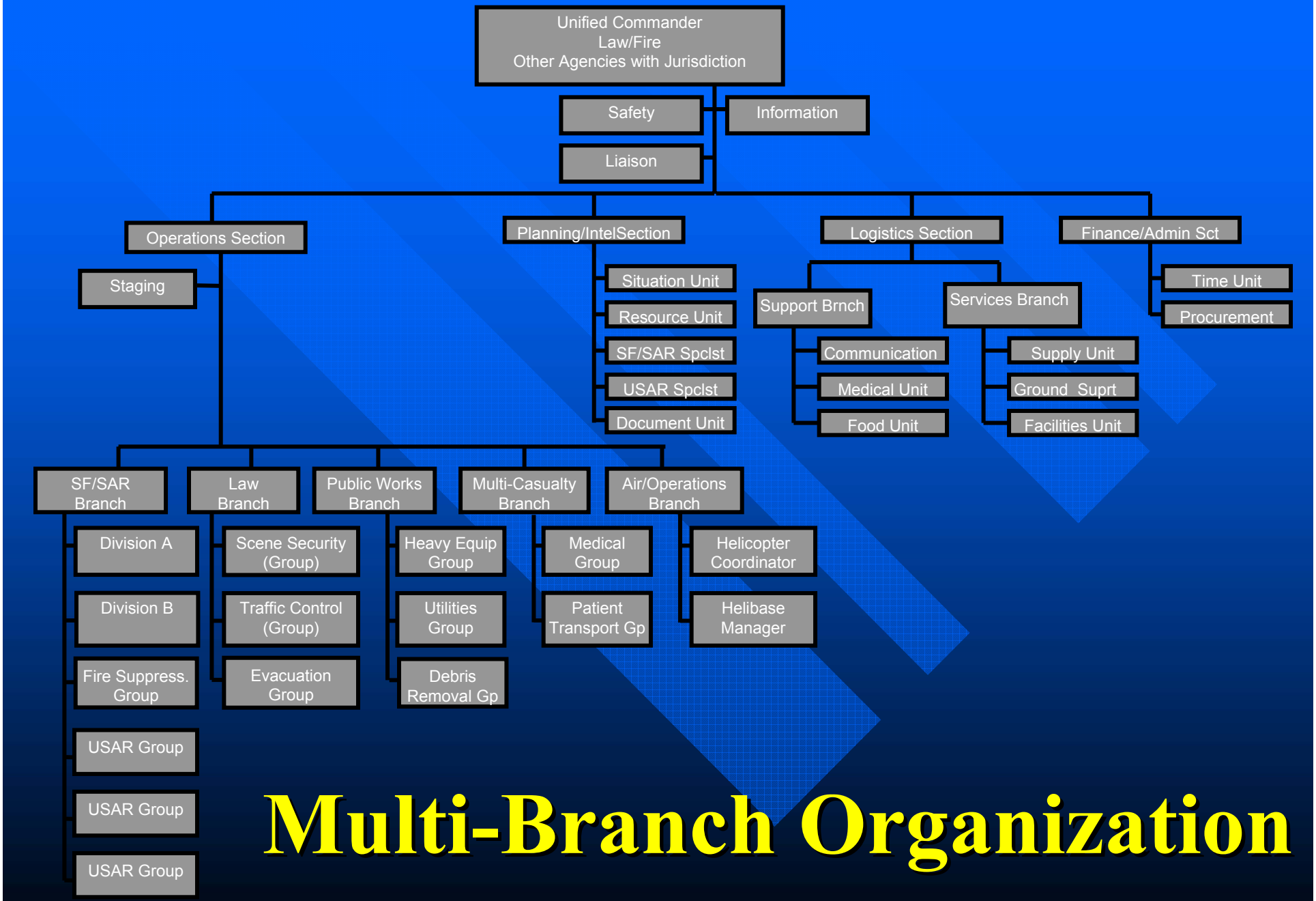


Example: Small Incident Mt. Saint Helens – Volcano

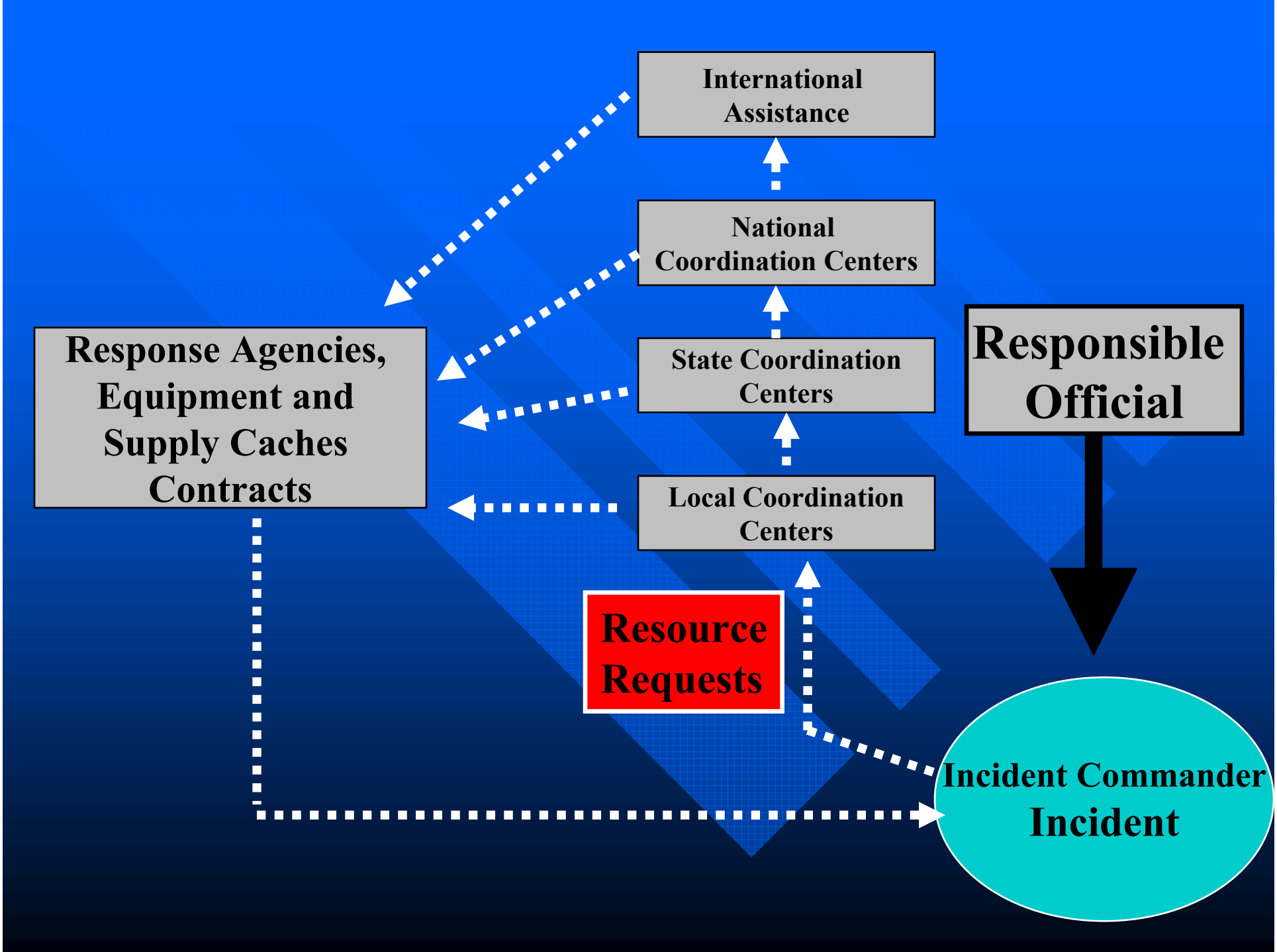
- The responsible official requested an Incident Management Team comprised of the Command and General Staff to monitor and develop a public safety and education program while the volcano was active and presented a potential threat to local communities.

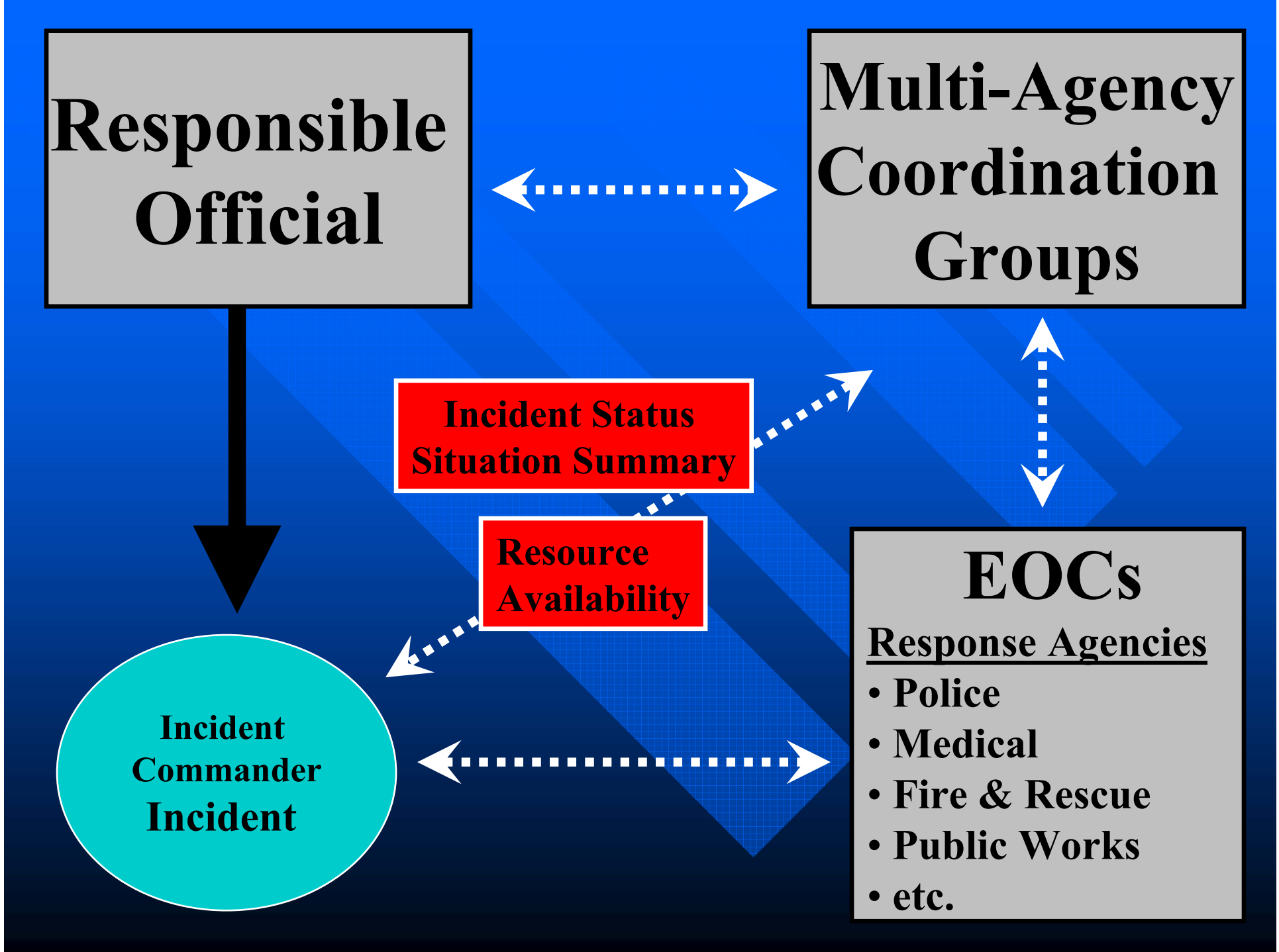
Example: Small to Complex Incident
Fire – Dynamic

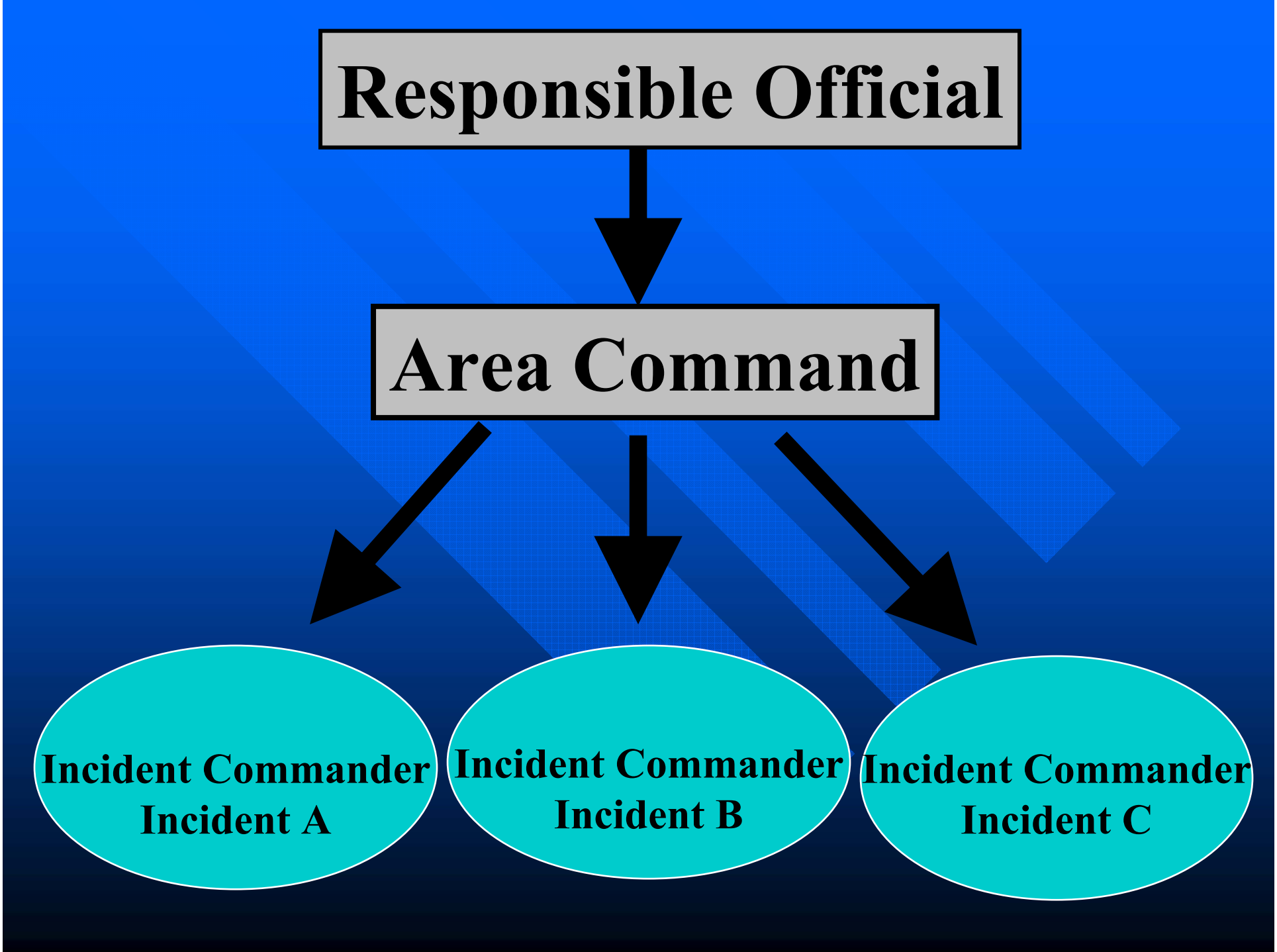
Example of a Complex Incident Hurricane Ivan: Multi-Branch


Unified Commander
Law/Fire
Other Agencies with Jurisdiction
Safety
Information
Liaison
Operations Section
Staging
Planning/IntelSection
Situation Unit
Resource Unit
SF/SAR Spclst
USAR Spclst
Document Unit
Logistics Section
Support Brnch
Communication
Medical Unit
Food Unit
Services Branch
Supply Unit
Ground Suprt
Facilities Unit
Finance/Admin Sct
Time Unit
Procurement
SF/SAR Branch
Division A
Division B
Fire Suppress. Group
USAR Group
USAR Group
USAR Group
Law Branch
Scene Security (Group)
Traffic Control (Group)
Evacuation Group
Public Works Branch
Heavy Equip Group
Utilities Group
Debris Removal Gp
Multi-Casualty Branch
Medical Group
Patient Transport Gp
Air/Operations Branch
Helicopter Coordinator
Helibase Manager
Multi-Branch Organization

Responsible Official
Local Incident Commander
Type 2 Incident Commander
Type 1 Incident Commander


International Assistance
National Coordination Centers
State Coordination Centers
Local Coordination Centers
Response Agencies, Equipment and Supply Caches Contracts
Responsible Official
Resource Requests
Incident Commander
Incident


Responsible Official
Multi-Agency Coordination Groups
Incident Status Situation Summary
Resource Availability
EOCs
Response Agencies
• Police
• Medical
• Fire & Rescue
• Public Works
• etc.
Incident Commander Incident


Responsible Official
Area Command
Incident Commander
Incident A
Incident Commander
Incident B
Incident Commander
Incident C

Key Points of ICS

- Delegation of Authority
- Flexible and dynamic
- Provides consistency
- Relies on functionalism
- Works on all incidents no matter the scope or size

Summary
Incident Command System

- Provides a Plan
- Organizes the resources
- Implements the actions
- Supports all personnel
- Effective Leadership Model

Questions?